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ABSTRACT

The major objective of this research was to give high school students the opportunity to speak for themselves on people, institutions, and issue they confront and think about daily. The survey consisted of 2,000 personal interviews held in more than 100 geographical areas and conducted by high school seniors under direct faculty supervision. The study raised questions concerning student attitudes toward school and home, as well as reactions to the social, political, and economic environment of the day. Among the results are the following: (1) youth acknowledge the importance of education and approve of the way high schools are providing that education; (2) a majority feel that good student-teacher interaction exists in their schools; (3) almost all think that year-round, part-time work should be a part of student activities; (4) regarding their futures, the students are extremely determined and ambitious; (5) students have grand salary expectations; (6) happiness and family life are valued as vital elements to a complete and satisfying life; and (7) primary concerns of students during the next five years will consist of completing their education, finding jobs, marriage, and raising a family. (Author/RM)

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The Mood of American Youth

1974

SP 007 924

National Association of Secondary School Principals
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Readers of the tables in this monograph will note that items in many of the *total* columns add up to more or less than 100 percent. Reasons for this include:

- Students were instructed to indicate *all* appropriate responses on some items
- Some students chose not to respond on some items
- Condensation of information and/or listing the most popular responses by the writer and editors.

FOREWORD

In concert with Gilbert Youth Research Division of Herff-Jones, the NASSP has completed one of the most comprehensive studies on high school students ever undertaken.

Our stated intention was to afford these students the opportunity to speak for themselves on people, institutions, and issues they confront and think about daily. To explore the mood of youth, the study raised questions concerning student attitudes toward school and home, as well as reactions to the social, political, and economic environment of the day.

The survey consisted of 2,000 personal interviews based on Gilbert's national probability sample of high school students, constructed with data from the U.S. Census Bureau and the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. Interviews were held in more than 100 geographical areas and conducted by high school seniors under direct faculty supervision.

We appreciate the generous contributions of several major industrial concerns. Additionally, we are grateful to George Mihaly, president of Gilbert Youth Research; Seymour M. Lipset, Harvard University professor; and Janis Cromer, writer of this report for their dedicated and conscientious service in this nationwide effort.

All of us share the hope that this study will enable all citizens —both young and old—to better understand the aspirations and feelings of today's youth.

OWEN B. KIERNAN
Executive Secretary
NASSP

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INTRODUCTION

THE changing moods and behavior of American youth challenge the ability of educational authorities to plan ahead. If we look back over the past two decades alone, a picture of highly different cultural cycles, each having lasted about half a decade, emerges. The second half of the 1950s was characterized by political passivity, cultural conformity, endorsement of Eisenhower conservatism, and ambition to succeed economically. The early Sixties, the Kennedy years, seemingly witnessed a renewed consciousness of youth as a social force, an emphasis among them on idealism within the American tradition, the growth of concern about civil rights for minority groups, and involvement in new cultural styles such as those exemplified by the "beats" and rock music. But idealism and cultural experimentation shifted to cynicism and the drug culture as America became mired deeper and deeper in the longest and most disastrous war in its history.

Faced with the prospect of being conscripted to fight in Vietnam, American youth turned to protest on a scale never before observed in this country. And the growing rejection of the war was accompanied by a general increase in lack of respect for all forms of authority, including that of the school, as well as by a growing disdain for conventional success goals. This period ended almost as quickly as it began, as draft calls declined and American troops began to leave Indochina. By the mid-Seventies, the colleges and high schools of the nation appear almost as quiet and the students as hard working and ambitious as those of 20 years earlier.

These fluctuating outlooks and patterns of behavior have been chronicled in depth by the opinion pollsters of the nation. The Gilbert

Youth Research Corp., the oldest organization dedicated to the study of young people, has enabled us to identify the changes in the orientations of these different generations of young people in their various earlier studies.

The survey reported here deals with the attitudes of a national sample of high school students during the "calm" of the mid-Seventies. Although its findings will not come as a surprise to those necessarily concerned with youth — parents and teachers — it is good for all of us to know how they are reacting to a period in which there is no draft, in which economic opportunities have declined, and in which the political system is experiencing the worst scandal in American history.

Gilbert's findings suggest that the large majority of high school students are satisfied with their country, families, and schools. On question after question, most show up as having conventional views with respect to traditional practices and morality. They report they like their parents and their teachers and have faith in our form of government.

Yet the picture is far from one of a young generation at ease with the adult world. Over two-fifths of those interviewed say they would be "happier" living away from their families. Many find it difficult to communicate with their parents. When asked about how they hope to deal with their own children, most believe they will do a better job, particularly in the areas of discipline and interaction. Over half claim that the administrators of their high schools do not understand their problems. Almost a third report that their teachers do not take an interest in students.

Coming on the heels of a great wave of student protest, these students of the 1970s seemingly are not good prospects for those who would reactivate youth politically. Over half of the respondents describe their own political views as "middle of the road." Only three percent favor the "radical left," fewer, in fact, than the four percent who prefer the "radical right." The remainder divide almost evenly between "liberals" (22 percent) and "conservatives" (18 percent).

Yet the lack of radicalism among them does not mean that they approve of the current political scene. Not surprisingly in the era of Watergate, 70 percent believe that "corruption and dishonesty are widespread at the highest levels of government." While slightly over half agree that the present form of government is "just about right," close to two-fifths feel that it needs considerable change, and six percent favor a "different form of government." Very few, however, look forward to much involvement in politics. Only three percent indicate that they expect to be active in politics in later life, and almost all rank politics very low as an area of personal concern.

Much has been written suggesting that interest in religion has replaced politics and activist concerns among this generation of young people. The results of the Mood of American Youth Study fail to sustain this impression. The majority of the students interviewed say that

they are not religious. Only 29 percent report attending religious services on a regular basis. This represents a considerable drop from the behavior of their parents, since 56 percent indicate that the latter attend services regularly.

As a group, these high school students are quite ambitious. Almost half plan to go on to college, while another tenth plan on some other form of post-secondary education. Two-fifths of them hope to become professionals. Close to half (46 percent) look forward to earning over $25,000 a year at the peak of their careers, while another 27 percent expect to secure between $15,000 and $25,000 — much more on the average than their parents. Most of them remain committed to working "very hard to achieve their life goals," a view which does not jibe with the pessimistic contention of those who feel that young people are looking for an easy life.

Within this generation, however, the subjective factors help to rein-

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force structural constraints, limiting prospects for equal opportunity. Black students see a less affluent future in front of them than do whites. But the phenomenon is more general than race.

The lower the income of a student's family, the more likely he is to anticipate continuing in a less affluent stratum as a working adult. Thus, those from families earning less than $7,000 a year are much more likely to think that shop and commercial courses in high school are important than are students from more well-to-do backgrounds ($15,000 or more). The proportion of youth from affluent origins planning to go on to college is over twice that among those whose parents are in the low income category. Over two-fifths of the poorer group expect a starting salary of less than $5,000 a year, compared to less than a fifth among those from the high income class. The proportion of the lowest income stratum (six percent) expecting to enlist in the armed services after graduation is double that among the scions of the well-to-do.

The responses of these high school students also suggest that historic sex-linked patterns of inequality will continue among this generation. The girls have lower occupational expectations than the boys, and they are more likely to retain beliefs with respect to family life and related norms that imply a special home keeper role for women. More than half of the males (57 percent) anticipate eventually earning over $25,000 a year, as contrasted to only 34 percent of the females.

Similar differences occur in response to questions asking respondents to evaluate the relative worth of "income security" as contrasted with taking a "chance for a larger income," and of "comfort" versus "hard work." The boys are more disposed than the girls to opt for hard work, and to favor taking risks to secure higher income.

A larger proportion of the females (34 percent) rank marriage and family as their highest concern than do those of the opposite sex (24 percent). The girls also favor larger families than do the boys. Thus 29 percent of the latter desire two children or less, as compared to 21 percent of the females. The identical proportion, 21 percent, of the prospective mothers are prepared to have as many as four or more offspring, a prospect that attracts only 14 percent of the possible future fathers. And perhaps more surprisingly, the female students are much less supportive of legalized abortion than the males.

These are a few of the results contained in the literally thousands of descriptive and analytic statistical tables that can be generated from this survey of high school student views. Some of the general findings are contained in this report. We are hopeful that they will form the basis for more thorough understanding of the current generation of youth both by themselves and the adults who interact with them.

SEYMOUR MARTIN LIPSETT
Professor of Government and Sociology
Harvard University

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YOUTH ON EDUCATION:
A General Satisfaction

EDUCATION is vitally important to today's youth. The students themselves not only acknowledge its importance, but generally approve of the way their high schools are providing that education. More than three-fourths of the students, breaking with the late 1960s practice of denouncing their schools, instead praise the educations they are receiving.

Students, too, have set their educational sights high. Despite recent concern over a growing dropout rate, a full 99 percent of the students intend to graduate from high school. Nearly half plan to continue their education at a post-secondary institution.

The majority of students feel high schools are at least adequately fulfilling the requirements for good college preparatory and business programs as well as providing satisfactory job opportunity guidance. More than half also report that high schools are adequately challenging students to develop their abilities and creativity.

Discontent with high school seems to increase consistently with age. A further example: Although most students indicated that their school is at least adequately encouraging them to think for themselves, one-fifth of all the students disagree. They feel their school is either "not doing very well" or is "very inadequate" in this area. The number of dissenters takes on greater proportions as student age increases. Only a sixth of the youngest students give their schools negative ratings on this topic, contrasted to the fourth of the 17-year-old age group who are dissatisfied with their schools' efforts to foster independent thinking.

However, this is the exception, not the rule. In all other areas

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TABLE 1

Whether high school has done a good job of educating respondent:

	% of Total
Is doing a good job	77.2
Is not doing a good job	20.3
No opinion	2.6

TABLE 2

Immediate plans after high school:

	% of Total
Go to junior college	12.6
Go to 4-year college	34.8
Go to training/vocational school	12.0
Get a job	29.0
Join volunteer armed services	4.8
Join volunteer organization	.3
Travel	5.7
Get married	5.7
Don't know/undecided	.4

TABLE 3

Degree to which high school fulfills specific requirements—Good college preparatory program:

	% of Total
Very well	17.7
Adequately	44.8
Not very well	11.0
Very inadequately	3.3
No opinion	23.2

TABLE 4

Degree to which high school fulfills specific requirements—Good program of business courses:

	% of Total
Very well	35.4
Adequately	39.7
Not very well	6.7
Very inadequately	1.8
No opinion	16.4

TABLE 5

Degree to which high school fulfills specific requirements—Guidance in job opportunities:

	% of Total
Very well	28.8
Adequately	39.5
Not very well	13.2
Very inadequately	4.0
No opinion	14.4

(knowledge and appreciation of the arts, demand for self-discipline, and encouragement to develop creativity), a majority of students claim their schools are performing adequately or better.

Practical Concerns—Eyes to the Future

Interestingly, while a majority of students are satisfied with their high schools' handling of various curriculum areas, a full quarter of the students have no opinion on how their schools are performing in these areas.

Students' intense and practical concern with their futures is demonstrated in what they believe are the most important aspects of the high school curriculum. College preparatory programs, encouragement

TABLE 6

Degree to which high school fulfills specific requirements—Encouragement to think for oneself

	% of Total	By Age				
		14 and under	15	16	17	18 and over
Very well	26.8	30.9	29.8	22.2	25.0	20.3
Adequately	38.5	34.7	40.1	43.8	35.1	33.9
Not very well	14.5	13.8	14.6	12.3	16.7	17.6
Very inadequately	6.3	2.2	6.1	7.3	7.9	10.7
No opinion	13.9	18.5	9.3	14.4	15.4	17.6

to think for oneself, and guidance in job opportunities are most frequently chosen as the important curriculum areas.

Clearly, these future-oriented, practical elements dominate the educational concerns of present-day youth. Curriculum aspects such as creativity development and arts and humanities appreciation, which bear less directly on day-to-day careers, are on the bottom of most students' lists. Less than a fifth of the students rank the encouragement of creativity among the three most important curriculum areas. Arts and humanities appreciation receives even less support; only one-tenth of the students consider it among the top three.

The emphasis by today's students on practical and career-related education is also reflected in their choice of additional high school course offerings. Students want more skill-oriented courses. Auto mechanics, more shop classes, computer science, driver's education, more physical education courses, and additional vocational training were mentioned as their top choices for new courses. To a lesser degree, students said they want courses in human relations training, black studies, fine arts, and a greater selection of foreign language courses.

Perhaps more revealing than the particular ideas for additional courses is the lack of such suggestions. Over a third of the students offered no suggestions for new classes. They explained that no additions were necessary: the courses are "good as they are."

However, students are not at a loss to suggest changes in the format of classroom instruction. More than half the students said more class discussion is a top priority. While remaining in harmony with conventional teaching methods, students propose the use of additional visual aids, more independent work, an increased number of field trips, and library research time.

The changes students are requesting are neither drastic nor particularly innovative. Very few students mentioned the grading system as an area in need of alteration, and only one person advocated the once popular idea of eliminating grades altogether.

Also noticeably absent from student educational proposals today is the desire for increased student rights. Students are not frequently

TABLE 7

General changes would like to see made in courses:

	% of Total	By Age				
		14 and under	15	16	17	18 and over
Make topics more "relevant" to life's needs	43.1	37.9	42.3	41.8	47.2	55.5
More audiovisual aids	39.5	37.4	42.7	39.7	37.7	32.9
More class discussion	54.6	56.3	55.7	51.1	55.6	52.2
Less class discussion	10.7	9.5	11.7	10.7	9.5	14.7
More individual work	28.0	30.7	26.3	25.7	30.0	31.7
Less individual work	26.7	22.8	32.9	24.7	23.2	24.4
More time for library research	27.6	35.7	28.4	21.7	26.5	24.0
More field trips	50.7	53.8	54.3	46.7	46.6	52.2
Other	14.8	13.4	15.7	15.2	15.7	8.2
No change/no answer	5.2	5.3	5.4	5.2	4.4	5.1

asking, as they once did, for more control over their high school curricula and increased student input in disciplinary procedures.

If students want a less structured educational setting, for example, they are proceeding differently from their predecessors in the Sixties. Today, student desire for a less formal classroom environment surfaces only in *requisitions* for changes such as more independent study options and increased use of audiovisual equipment. Student desires are seldom expressed in the form of strikes, boycotts, and demonstrations. The energies invested in the protests of the last decade now seem to be run off in sports participation, community volunteer services, and, more recently, streaking sprees.

Much has been written about today's enchantment with nostalgia, but present day youth are not yearning for the "good ole days" of 1969. They are reaching even further back, perhaps to the era of bobby socks and ponytails. These sentimental journeys reveal a generation concerned not with national political issues, but with waging small scale local improvement campaigns.

One plea from past years *has* carried over to today's student concerns: "relevancy" in education. Students still want the relevancy that they demanded five years ago, but now they are *requesting* relevant educational experiences, not vehemently insisting on them.

Despite a lack of proposals for major curriculum innovations and the majority's contention that their schools are doing a good job of educating them, more than half of the students report they are *not* particularly interested in the courses they are taking. This figure drops slightly as the age of students increases. As students progress in high school, a wider range of courses are available. Perhaps the marginal increase in student interest can be attributed to the greater variety of courses from which to choose.

What, then, makes a course particularly interesting to today's

youth? Class material that is "relevant to my future needs" was the most frequently offered reply. Dull subject matter and "unimportant" facts combined with "irrelevancy," the students report, comprise the least interesting courses. Some students accuse teachers of having inadequate teaching abilities while others charge their instructors with failing to create interest in their classrooms. Relatively few students feel their courses are not interesting because the subject matter is too difficult.

Regardless of how uninteresting they find their courses, students strongly believe their classes are important to them personally. In fact, traditional subjects like math, English, science, and history are rated as "somewhat important" or "very important" by three-fourths or more of the students. Business courses, environment and pollution classes, sex education, and physical education are also given high ratings of importance. Art and music courses are viewed as less necessary; less than half of the students rank these classes as important. Two-fifths of the students termed foreign language classes as "not so important" or "not important at all."

In spite of much speculation about the changing societal roles and attitudes of women, today's female high school students have adopted traditional outlooks on many of their personal values and goals.

Female students rate college preparatory programs lower in importance than do male students. This difference in ranking may be explained by the slightly greater percentage of men who plan to attend college.

Women rate English, business, and home economics courses as personally important, while more men rank math, physical education, and shop classes as important. These male and female opinions on the "important" courses are vaguely congruent with conventional sex-role stereotypes. In subjects such as government and driver's education, only slight ranking discrepancies exist between the sexes.

High school students appear to be almost evenly divided about whether or not they have reached a satisfactory level of scholastic achievement. Half the students feel they have not reached an adequate level and attribute their shortcomings to a variety of reasons: "the

TABLE 8

Reasons for being particularly interested in specific courses:

		By Age				
	% of Total	14 and under	15	16	17	18 and over
Subject matter is interesting	33.3	38.1	33.4	31.6	30.3	35.1
Class projects are challenging	6.4	7.3	5.8	6.0	7.4	5.3
Course material is relevant for future needs	40.7	30.7	38.4	44.8	47.0	47.5

courses were not taught effectively"; "I didn't study enough"; and "the subject was not interesting enough to hold my attention."

Courses, Teachers, and School Services—The Best and the Worst

Once again, student opinion changes with age. As students grow more critical, or perhaps more discontented, with age, they more frequently reason that their courses are not taught effectively enough to sustain interest and, therefore, their personal level of achievement.

One reason students in the Seventies find they are content with schools is their teachers. A majority of high school youth feels that good student-teacher interaction exists in their schools. Most believe their teachers are sincerely trying to help them and claim their instructors relate well with all students.

More understanding and willingness to communicate with students was most frequently suggested as a measure to promote still greater interaction. The need for more classroom discussion was also reiterated as a method to improve faculty-pupil relations. One-fourth of the students offered no proposals for improving such relations.

Teacher disinterest and apathy are named as major causes of poor student-teacher relations, but less than a third of the students accused their teachers of those faults. They offer explanations ranging from "teachers don't understand students" to "teachers have a superior attitude" to "students give teachers a hard time."

However, high school youth praise their teachers' attempts at individualized instruction. Almost three-fourths of the students report that they have at some time received individual academic assistance and nearly all termed such instruction as helpful. Those who said they have never received individual instruction feel their teachers are either unaware of student needs for individual help, or are unwilling to devote their time to such practices.

While few students blame overcrowded classes for poor student-teacher interaction, a fourth of those not receiving individual instruction claim "too many students" prevent them from gaining such attention.

The students advocate more individual instruction, particularly in

TABLE 9

Reasons for not reaching satisfactory level of achievement (partial):

		By Age				
	% of Total	*14 and under*	*15*	*16*	*17*	*18 and over*
Courses not taught effectively	41.8	36.1	40.7	40.9	46.6	48.0
I didn't study enough	48.2	44.2	51.9	43.4	50.0	52.5
Work not planned specifically to meet my needs	24.2	30.4	26.8	20.8	18.7	29.1
Subject not interesting enough to hold my attention	57.9	53.9	60.6	59.3	56.8	54.2

TABLE 10

Whether there is a good student-teacher interaction at school:

	% of Total
There is good student-teacher interaction	58.8
There is not good student-teacher interaction	37.7
Don't know/depends/no answer	3.5

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TABLE 11

Reasons why there isn't a good student-teacher interaction at the school:

	% of Total
Teachers don't take an interest/ they don't care/they don't listen	29.4
Students give teachers a hard time	5.2
Classes are overcrowded	3.6
Teacher has a superior attitude	6.8
Teachers and students do not get along	8.2
Answer not applicable	15.0

TABLE 12

Reasons for not receiving individualized instruction:

	% of Total
Teacher provides instructions to the class only	7.8
Teacher unaware of students' needs	18.3
Teacher not willing to spend time with individuals	22.3
Teacher too busy with other things	12.6
There is no time in class	8.5
There are too many students	22.6
I don't need it	2.8
I never asked for it	4.4
My teacher and I don't get along/ don't relate	1.3

the traditionally required high school courses. Math topped the list, followed by English and science courses, needing additional individualized instruction.

What teaching traits win approval from today's students? The characteristics mentioned most often by students describing their "best" teacher are "a desire to help students progress academically"; "an ability to relate to students"; and "a pleasant personality." In addition, students admire teachers with the ability to speak well and hold students' attention. Only a fifth of the students characterized their best teachers as having an exceptional amount of knowledge of the subject they teach.

When describing their "worst" teachers, students most frequently mention the traits directly opposite to those they cited for their "best" teachers. "Worst" teachers are unable to hold student attention; display no desire to help the students improve scholastically; and are personally unpleasant. However, only a fifth of the students criticize their worst teacher for being "too strict" and for assigning too much homework.

As was the case with teachers, high school youth give a generally positive rating of their guidance counselors, despite the majority of students' contention that they rarely, if ever, see their counselors.

While most students feel their schools employ a significant number of counselors, less than 10 percent report meeting with their counselors "very often." A third of the students claim to meet with their counselors occasionally.

Those who report seeing their counselors at least occasionally maintain they do so primarily to seek assistance in required and elective course selection and for career counseling. Only one-tenth of the students visit their guidance counselors for disciplinary reasons.

Many students feel they either "have no problems" or "no reason" to meet with their counselors. Less frequently, other students claim their counselors are always too busy to see them or that they themselves are too busy to visit their counselors. Still others complain that the counselors were not helpful or had an unpleasant attitude toward students.

Nevertheless, a large number of the students who claim to seldom come in contact with their guidance counselors evaluate the counselors' job performance positively. While over two-fifths of the students meet only rarely with their counselors, more than four-fifths of the same students claim their counselors are helpful in assisting them with career planning. In all areas — academic studies help, part-time job placement, scholarship information, college selection and requirements — guidance counselors are described as helpful by at least a majority of the students.

As teenagers approach college age, their estimation of guidance counselors' performance regarding college selection and scholarship information improves. This may be explained by a simultaneous drop

in the number of students offering no opinion on this topic. More 14-year-olds give no opinion regarding counselor helpfulness in college selection than do the future-conscious 17-year-olds. As leaving high school becomes more of a reality, students seem to become more aware of available guidance resources, even if they do not personally utilize them.

The overall positive student reports of teachers and counselors also extends to high school administrators. Three-fourths of the students feel their principals and/or assistant principals are interested in the students and their academic programs.

Interest, however, apparently differs from *understanding* in high school students' eyes. The students are equally split in their opinions of whether administrators have an understanding of student problems. Half the students have confidence that their principals and assistant principals possess such an understanding. In addition, most students report that their school administrators are usually accessible for discussing student concerns and problems.

Whether due to old-fashioned school pride or a recently revised perception of the high school as a "student ally," most students feel their schools are innovative, willing to try new teaching methods and courses. One-third of the students disagreed, arguing that their schools are not exploring educational advances.

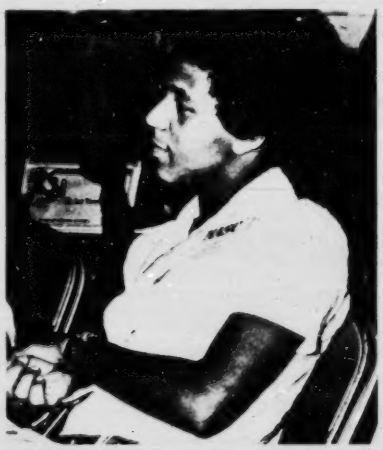
How committed are today's students to ensuring that innovation takes place in their schools? Nearly a third of the students chose to work within the existing school structure. A fifth chose the long-range option of entering education as a career to make such changes. Another fifth of the students said they would do nothing except hope for such changes, and 13 percent report that they do not care if innovative changes are made in their schools.

None of the response choices includes the option to operate "out-

TABLE 13

What student would do to work for innovations in the school:

	% of Total
Work within school structure to see that they go into effect	30.1
Try to convince teachers, politicians, or family to bring pressure to bear so that they go into effect	31.9
Work to enter field of education at influential level to effect these innovations	22.5
Nothing in particular other than hope for them	19.1
Don't really care/no answer	15.0



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side the system" (for example, boycotts or demonstrations). Still, the large number of students who either didn't care or merely hoped for innovative changes indicate that today's youth are not motivated to mass protest.

Students' newly found, or rediscovered, approval of their teachers', counselors', and administrators' performances, does not overflow extensively into their opinion of high school student governments. Only a little more than a tenth of the students feel their student council or student assembly successfully represents student interests. And these student organizations are viewed even less favorably as student age increases. Only one-twentieth of the senior age students feel that student councils represent their concerns "very well," contrasted to over a fifth of the 14-year-olds who rate their student councils positively. The majority of students credit their student councils' efforts with only limited success.

Given students' generally warm support of administrators as well as teachers, this attitude toward student councils is unexpected. Perhaps this is the perpetual student attitude toward student governing organizations. Through no organizational fault of student councils, their realm of influence is often narrow, and this limitation of power may cause the majority of the student body to view the student government unfavorably or as not acting in the students' greatest interests. Perhaps today's students feel greater freedom to criticize a peer group organization rather than parts of the "establishment" such as teachers and administrators. Perhaps today's apparently quiet breed of students is mildly castigating the organizations they feel should be more outspoken in representing the concerns they themselves are reluctant to speak out for.

Regardless of how good an education students feel they are getting, and despite strong reports of positive pupil-teacher interaction, students today do not want to remain in classrooms year round. More than nine-tenths of the students voted "thumbs down" to a 12-month school calendar. As in most other areas, the majority of students approve of the status quo. Most students want the school year to be nine months or, if a change is to be made, the student opinions lean toward a shorter academic year, between seven and nine months.

TABLE 14

How well the student council/assembly represents the students' interests:

		By Age				
	% of Total	*14 and under*	*15*	*16*	*17*	*18 and over*
Very successfully	13.3	21.4	13.3	10.3	11.2	6.6
Somewhat successfully	56.4	51.0	56.9	59.2	56.8	57.8
Not successfully at all	18.7	16.1	15.9	19.3	24.1	21.7
Don't know	11.5	11.4	13.8	11.2	7.9	13.9

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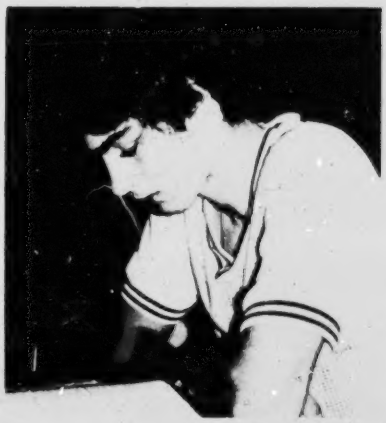
TABLE 15

Whether high school students should work:

	% of Total
High school students should work	92.0
High school students should not work	7.9
No answer	.1
Time high school students should work:	
Part-time year-round	84.0
Full-time year-round	4.8
Only during school holidays	.5
Only during summer vacation	10.4
No answer	.2



As has always been the case, there is more to education than textbooks and teachers. Activities beyond school walls not only are an important component in the mood of American youth today, but they also have a significant effect on students' reactions to their education system. For example, students' repeatedly emphasized concern for "relevancy" stems from comparing what they experience outside the classroom to the information and knowledge they acquire in school.

Should Students Work?

One major beyond-the-classroom experience for students is entering the job market. Students today are committed to pursuing employment opportunities, even while still in high school. "Almost all students agree that year-round, part-time work should be a part of their activities. Only a tenth of the students feel that summer is the appropriate time to be employed.

Do students practice what they preach? Not completely. While almost all advocate part-time, year-round employment, less than half the students are actually employed. The older respondents, of course, report being employed in significantly greater numbers than do the younger students.

Students feel work is an important experience for them and recommend that a variety of jobs be open to them. Almost any type will do, provided the work is interesting. Nearly one-tenth of the students feel any employment for which they qualify should be available to them. An almost equal number named career-related apprenticeships or work-study programs as possible job opportunities for youth.

This is consistent with today's student concern for the future. Just as students request career-related courses in their high schools, they want job experiences that will have value for later life. Yet, this concern for career preparation does not seem to break down students' tradi-

tional attitudes about what jobs are appropriate for men and for women.

Only a tenth of the male students cite clerical and secretarial positions as the jobs which should be available to students. Twice as many girls name these kinds of jobs as fields that should be open to students. Female students also mention cashier and sales occupations four times as frequently as boys do.

Students who work during the school year are divided about how the jobs affect their health, social life, extracurricular activities, and school work. While most say that jobs have no adverse effects on their health or their school work, slightly less than half concede that their work interferes with their social life and extracurricular activities. Students today feel work experience is an important element in young lives and are confident that a job can be pursued without sacrificing academic success.

Do today's parents share their children's attitudes toward working during the school year? According to their offspring, no. A majority of parents, students say, feel students should not work from September to June.

Yet, as students grow older, they report a parental change of heart. Almost half the 18-year-olds claim their parents expect them to work during the school year, compared to only a fifth of the 14-year-olds who feel their parents share this expectation.

Financial status has some bearing on parental attitudes toward their children's employment. Students from lower income backgrounds re-

TABLE 16

Kinds of work that should be made available to students:

	% of Total	Male	Female
Clerical work - in office	12.2	5.4	19.5
Cashier, bank teller, box office	5.0	1.4	8.9
Sales in stores, clerk	16.5	9.6	23.7
Community work/social work	.7	.2	1.2
Food service work	11.8	11.0	12.4
Gas station work	6.0	8.4	3.7
Stock room work	7.9	12.3	3.2
Factory and construction	3.0	4.0	3.4
Babysitting/mother's helper	2.3	1.2	3.1
Maintenance and farm work	4.0	4.9	3.1
Delivery/messenger/paper route	2.3	2.3	2.2
Hospital work/nurse's aide	1.3	1.0	1.5
Apprentice jobs	1.6	2.5	.7
Part-time jobs	4.3	4.5	4.0
Work/study program within school	1.4	1.3	1.6
Work relating to future career goals	9.8	9.6	10.0
Work that student is qualified for	8.7	9.0	8.4
All kinds of work/interesting work	30.2	31.9	28.4
Others	4.0	4.6	3.3
Don't know/no opinion	7.2	7.8	6.6

port greater employment expectations from their parents than do the students whose parental incomes are over $10,000 per year. Significantly, more parents with lower incomes believe their children should work during the school year. However, in fact, these students from lower income brackets do not have jobs during the school year in any greater numbers than the students from more affluent homes do.

When summer approaches, both parental expectations and student realizations of job opportunities take an upward swing. A majority of parents feel their children should be employed during the summer months. And almost 40 percent are.

Fewer females than males report being expected to work during the summer and fewer females report actually working during this time.

Extra-Class Activities—Work and Recreation

Apart from school and work, what occupies today's students' free time? Many report some association with social organizations such as the YMCA, YWCA, and scouting. Almost half are involved in volunteer community service, hoping to improve the local sphere with which they are personally familiar.

Community-based activities are popular among female students who are involved in such volunteer work as charity fund-raising, hospital work, and environmental preservation. More than half of the students who are currently involved in these programs indicate they would like to participate in even more work of this kind.

Sports are another major free-time consumer. A majority of all students claim they are regular sports participants. However, as jobs and

TABLE 17

Hobbies or special interests:

	At present	*First choice*
	% of Total	*% of Total*
Art	33.9	13.8
Dancing	31.6	12.3
Music	43.6	20.0
Dramatics	12.2	2.9
Cooking & baking	39.5	10.2
Sewing & knitting	25.9	5.9
Photography	20.9	5.5
Model building	17.8	6.1
Woodworking	17.9	4.2
Science hobbies	11.5	2.7
Collecting things	28.6	5.9
Reading	.9	.5
Writing	.3	—
Working on cars	.9	.7
Other	3.0	1.2
Don't have a hobby or special interest	8.7	8.7
Don't know/no answer	.8	2.4

other time commitments increase as students grow older, the number of sports-minded students drops considerably. Younger students invest more of their energies in sports of all kinds.

For the athletically active students, sports are not merely a casual pastime. Like their academic studies and part-time jobs, today's students pursue athletics very seriously. Half the students who participate in sports belong to organized teams. And while the men still outnumber the women in team membership, a surprising 40 percent of the women join in organized team competition.

As was the case with student employment and academic achievement, youth today believe that participation in sports and classroom success are not mutually exclusive. While students overwhelmingly agree that it is possible to both be active in sports and keep up with their studies, the majority feels that academic achievement is more important than participation in athletics.

Students say that emphasis on high school sports is increasing, and they welcome the change as a long overdue improvement. Three-fourths of the students concur that more attention is being given to high school athletics, and most feel the change is a result of students' rather than school officials' wishes. An increasing desire for more athletic activity is evidenced in the many student requests for additional physical education courses such as judo, self-defense training, and individual sports that can be continued in later life.

Also, the large amount of leisure time devoted to active participation in sports, especially baseball, basketball, football, and swimming, indicates today's students are interested in seeing athletics assume a

TABLE 18

Sports actively participate in:

	% of Total		*% of Total*
Archery	.9	Ice skating	5.4
Auto racing	1.7	Ping pong	2.4
Badminton	2.7	Roller skating	2.5
Baseball (softball)	34.6	Skiing (snow)	5.4
Basketball	39.3	Skin diving	.2
Bicycling	5.9	Sledding	.6
Boating	1.5	Soccer	6.8
Bowling	10.9	Swimming	22.7
Boxing	.7	Tennis	15.6
Camping	.9	Track & field	9.2
Fishing	2.9	Volleyball	14.5
Football	40.3	Water skiing	2.1
Golf	3.8	Wrestling	4.3
Handball	2.1	Gymnastics	2.8
Hiking	2.4	Other	10.5
Hockey	6.7	None	16.0
Horseback riding	5.2	Don't know	1.5
Hunting	3.6	No answer	1.8

greater role in their high school curricula. A host of hobbies also interests today's students, many of which have career possibilities.

What other forces shape today's students' lives? As in the past, nearly all students listen to the radio, watch television, and go to the movies at least once a month.

Cultural events — visiting museums or art exhibits — do not have high student appeal. Almost half admitted to not visiting a museum or gallery in the last three months, and most others claimed either one or two such excursions to their credit.

Reading seems, for the most part, to be a "classroom-only" activity. The majority of students today read less than one book per month, *including* school-assigned readings. Most students spend less than two hours per week reading non-course related material. A great majority of students, however, claim to read local newspapers. School newspapers are still widely read but the once-popular underground papers capture the glances of less than a fifth of the students. It appears that more of the older students, to whom the newspapers are more readily accessible, do read the underground publications.

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STUDENTS LOOK AHEAD:
A Cautious Optimism

REGARDING their futures, students today are extremely determined and ambitious. Career plans seem to be set in motion very early in life; few students cannot describe their career aspirations.

Not afraid of making commitments, long-range or otherwise, young people are no longer romanticizing uncharted ramblings and the absence of social obligations. Traditional careers, especially in professional fields of medicine and law, seem to be more appealing to students today. Trips to the West Coast and marathon rock concerts are being exchanged for law degrees and weekly paychecks.

Professional occupations are the goals of many students and the accompanying professional salaries are not the least inviting aspects of these careers. Not only are educational and occupational objectives set high by today's youth, but financial expectations loom large in students' sights. Almost all intend to earn no less than $15,000 a year.

Jobs, Personal Happiness, and Family Life

Despite a great concern for financial well-being, today's youth also value happiness and family life as vital elements to a complete and satisfying life. Fame, the students say, is best forsaken for happiness, and a happy home life outweighs the risks of adventure and intrigue.

In the next five years, students predict they will be concerned primarily with jobs, marriage, and family obligations. For the younger students, school will be the dominant factor. Religion and preserving the environment do not seem to be major elements of personal concern. Politics, by a wide margin, ranks lowest as an area expected to be of personal importance to the students in the next five years.

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TABLE 19

Future Life Preference:

	% of Total
Fame	7.6
Happiness	91.7
Can't say	.6

Life Preference:	% of Total
Good family life	74.2
Many interesting experiences	25.3
Can't say	.5

Income preference:	% of Total	Male	Female
Income security	70.1	65.1	75.3
Take chance for larger income	29.3	34.5	23.8
Don't know	1.1	.4	.9

Comfort preference:	% of Total
Comfort	48.2
Hard work	50.3
Don't know	1.6

Young women today have particularly traditional visions of their futures. The women's rights movement seems to have barely made a dent in today's female career aspirations. The majority of women students are planning to pursue occupations which are dominated by female employees — teaching, nursing, and secretarial work. Very few young women aspire to be architects, engineers, or mechanics.

Furthermore, women students do not have income expectations anywhere close to the salary ranges the male students anticipate. Females expect less pay for the jobs they are preparing for. Three times as many men as women plan to skyrocket into the $50,000 per year income bracket within 10 years of starting their careers.

Marriage and family life appeal to most young women. They are more in favor of earlier marriages than men, despite both sexes' overwhelming contention that such unions are more likely to end in divorce. More women than men continue to want large families, although most students feel two or three children make the ideal size family.

Will the offspring of today's youth be raised any differently from the way today's parents brought up their children? The students say yes. As parents, they promise to be less strict and more understanding.

But are parent-child problems today deeply-rooted philosophical conflicts or merely communication difficulties? More than half the stu-

dents claim they can openly discuss their problems with their parents. Another third of the students find confidants in their brothers and sisters.

Most students characterize their family life as friendly, happy, and to a lesser degree, fun. They paint their parents, for the most part, as somewhat modern with a tendency to have a small holdover of old-fashioned notions. And most parents are just about as strict as other parents with very few parents qualifying for excessively strict or lenient characterizations.

The future looks good to most students. They have high aspirations and the determination to realize their objectives. Students today are *not* seeking a new mode of lifestyle. Neither are they advocating changes in the structure of the nuclear family, nor are they forsaking material gains for a return to "simpler" living.

Definite Goals—Traditional Patterns

High school students today are ambitiously planning both their immediate and long-range goals. Graduation from high school, while once an objective not common to all, is now a goal that 99 percent of the students plan to achieve. However, students from lower economic backgrounds do not report having high school graduation plans to the nearly-unanimous degree that other students do. Although the discrepancy is not great, more students whose parental incomes fall below $7,000 a year do not plan on completing high school than do students of wealthier parents.

For many students, education ambitions extend beyond high school. Over a third intend to enroll in a four-year institution and a quarter of the students have their eyes on either junior colleges or vocational schools.

However, higher education isn't seen equally on all students' horizons. Students coming from lower economic backgrounds plan on college careers far less often than do students from wealthier families. Twice as many students with family incomes of $15,000 or more intend to enroll at four-year colleges as do students from families earning less than $7,000 a year. The students from less wealthy backgrounds who plan to continue their post-secondary educations are more likely to attend junior colleges or training and vocational schools.

The increasing enrollment in vocational schools is particular evidence of today's student focus on the practical and future-oriented aspects of life. Many students whose families cannot afford four years of college tuition expenses plan to attend vocational schools. Learning practical skills which will secure a reliable economic future is becoming a very acceptable career route among today's students.

Few students seem undecided about their post-graduation plans. Those who do not plan to continue formal education indicate they will either get a job, join the armed forces, travel, or get married. Students from moderate family incomes appear to be much more likely to enlist

in the armed forces than do students from more financially well-off homes.

Career Choices—Courageous Convictions

After their schooling is finally completed, what kinds of careers will today's students pursue? Professional and technical fields in law, architecture, medicine, and teaching are the goals of many. Two-fifths of the students want jobs with professional status, often naming dentistry, social work, and nursing along with the others like medicine and law.

While interest in professional areas is by far the greatest of all the job fields, age seems to temper career goals. As age increases, students show an interest in a wider range of jobs. In particular, more students indicate attraction to business and industry careers. Twice as many 17-year-olds say they plan to enter business- or industry-related jobs as do 14-year-olds. This increase may be attributed to a greater exposure to business classes as students progress in school. In addition, as students grow older, they more often come directly in contact with business enterprise. More of the older students have part-time jobs during the school year and full-time summer positions. These experiences may influence students to consider business and industry endeavors as career possibilities.

A fifth of all students announced plans to map out business or industry careers for themselves. Yet, a disproportionate number of those students are women seeking employment, most often as clerks or secretaries. Women going into business fields outnumbered men two to one.

Time and time again, today's students demonstrate their adherence to traditionally sex-linked employment patterns. Women most frequently mention social work, teaching, clerical and secretarial work, and homemaking.

The hopes of the women's liberation organizations may be dampened by the lack of diverse career ambitions among today's female high school students. The movement will be hard put to find a "new breed"

TABLE 20

Career to be pursued:

				Age				
	% of Total	*Male*	*Female*	*14 and under*	*15*	*16*	*17*	*18 and over*
Business/industry	19.1	12.9	25.6	13.4	16.5	20.9	26.9	16.2
Professional/technical	40.4	38.7	42.3	43.0	44.2	36.1	36.8	41.1
Skilled craftsman	6.8	12.6	.6	6.1	7.1	6.6	6.3	10.1
Laborer/operative	2.1	3.1	1.1	1.3	3.3	1.0	2.1	2.5
Service worker	4.2	3.9	4.5	2.5	3.3	5.5	5.3	5.9
Agriculture	2.2	3.0	1.2	3.2	2.0	1.9	2.2	.5
Miscellaneous	5.5	3.6	7.6	7.1	5.2	5.5	4.7	4.6
Don't know/no answer	18.4	20.7	16.0	22.5	17.2	20.3	14.5	18.9

of female architects and engineers among today's youth. Most likely, if students today realize their stated career goals, elementary school teachers will still largely be women, just as carpenters and chemists will be men.

While a number of high school women are interested in pursuing a law career, they remain outnumbered by men almost three to one. Medicine seems to be the one exception. An equal number of male and female students say they are planning careers in dentistry. And even more surprising, more women than men have hopes of becoming medical doctors. While it is not true that women who were once content to be nurses have taken control of the country's stethoscopes (still, eight times as many women than men want to be nurses), at least in the field of medicine women are aspiring to the higher professional levels.

Financial background seems to play a significant role in a person's career plans. Although career goals may be formulated from personal choice and self-imposed limitations, differences in future job expectations do exist between students from lower and higher income families. Fewer students whose parental incomes are below $10,000 per year say they intend to enter professional or technical fields as careers. The lower income students are more apt to mention laborer, service worker, or skilled craftsman occupations as their personal job choices than are the children of wealthier parents.

Exceptions to this generalization are plentiful. Parental income does not seem to affect the number of students who wish to study law or medicine. Just as many students whose parents earn $7,000 a year have hopes of becoming doctors, for instance, as do students whose parents' salaries are $15,000 per year.

Interestingly today's students show little inclination to abandon the industrialized world to get "back to nature." Almost all see a niche for themselves somewhere in the mainstream of the often hectic, modern world. The once-popular longing to retreat from the world in the fashion of Henry David Thoreau does not seem to draw contemporary youth.

Another field of endeavor not popular with young people today is politics. None of the students expressed a desire to become a politician. Disenchantment is to be expected during politically tumultuous times, and students today appear to be unanimously ignoring such career possibilities as city councilmen, political party officials, state legislators, congressmen, and senators.

Almost a fifth of the students have not decided on a career field, with slightly more men than women still weighing the occupational alternatives. These students feel that making this decision is extremely difficult. On the other hand, about three-fourths of the students are fairly certain of their career choices.

Furthermore, the degree of decision or indecision does not seem to depend on the age of students. Fourteen-year-olds appear just as certain about their career preferences as do the older students. Financial

background also has little influence on the decisiveness of students regarding their future job choices. This refutes two antiquated adages about youth: young people from wealthier families have a tendency to "play around" with their futures because their parents' pocketbooks will tolerate indecision; and lower income youth have neither the motivation nor the determination to set their lives on career-bound courses.

Great Expectation—$$$

In keeping with mighty ambitions and high career goals, students today also have grand salary expectations. Reasonably, most students anticipate making between five and ten thousand dollars a year at their first jobs after completing their educations. Another fifth of the students expect to earn more than $10,000 a year as their first salary.

Pay increases are expected to abound during the first 10 years of working. The majority of students are planning to earn salaries ranging between $10,000 and $25,000 within the first decade after completing their educations. Another optimistic tenth of the students anticipate between $25,000 and $50,000 a year in wages. And student expectations do not stop here.

At the peak of their careers, almost half the students anticipate earning more than $25,000 a year. In other words, almost all of today's students picture themselves as achieving at least middle class financial status. Three-fourths of today's youth expect incomes of over $15,000 a year. Furthermore, almost a fifth of the students, differing dramatically with their recent predecessors who expended considerable verbal energy in renouncing material wealth, anticipate salaries of over $50,000 a year at the peak of their careers.

Today, not only are students' financial hopes at odds with the philosophical preachings of students in the late Sixties, but these monetary aspirations differ quite radically from the salaries their own parents are making. Keeping in mind that nearly a third of the students didn't know their parents' incomes, less than a tenth of the parents earn over $25,000 a year. More than a third of today's students plan on earning that rate of pay within the first 10 years of employment.

TABLE 21

Expected salary at peak of career:

	% of Total	*Male*	*Female*
Less than $5,000	.7	.3	1.1
$5,000 to $10,000	4.4	3.2	5.8
$10,000 to $15,000	12.7	9.7	16.0
$15,000 to $25,000	26.6	24.7	28.6
$25,000 to $50,000	27.1	32.5	21.4
More than $50,000	18.8	24.3	13.0

However, these glamorous economic objectives are not shared by all students alike. Both women and students from lower income backgrounds anticipate receiving considerably less pay at all stages of their careers. Almost half of the students whose parents' incomes are less than $7,000 a year expect to make under $5,000 a year at their first jobs, compared to less than a fifth of the students from families with incomes of over $15,000 a year who foresee earning under $5,000 a year from their first employer.

Some salary trends concerning women should be noted. More than a third of the female students expect to draw salaries of over $25,000 a year at the peaks of their careers. Not only is this an aspiration not realized by a third of today's working women, but it is also a goal which was not even *contemplated* by a third of women students not too many years ago. Female students, then, do not hope for goals as high as male students do, but the women are hoping for the realization of their own *individual* career objectives.

Career Values—"Selling Out" or Helping Others?

"As young people grow older, idealism turns to cynicism." At least in some respects, this adage does not apply to today's youth. Most students do not feel that to make a decent living, they will have to "sell out to business." Under a fifth of the students believe that compromising their principles is a prerequisite for economic survival. The older students adhere to this principle no more than the younger, more idealistic students. Yet, for almost a third of the students the answer to "is it necessary to sell out to business?" is up in the air; 30 percent of the respondents had no opinion on the issue.

Not only do students reject the idea of selling out to business as a necessary evil, but most students refuse to believe that they will find their future jobs boring and monotonous. Only slightly more than a tenth of the students strongly feel that they will be disinterested in any job they hold.

Student optimism today also extends into the realm of volunteer service. Almost half of the students agree that spending a year or two in a service organization, such as the Peace Corps, is a "good idea." However, the students demonstrate that "good ideas" are not always acted upon. While most students recognize volunteer service as a beneficial endeavor, not even one percent of them indicated they would pursue such work after completing high school or college. "Good ideas" sometimes seem to be good realities only for "the other guy."

As noted earlier, students today have very positive feelings about their high school educations and most intend to continue their schooling at a post-secondary level. That high regard for education is evident when students contemplate their working lives. Most students feel strongly that employment in a company which provides opportunities for further education is better than working for one which doesn't offer such possibilities. Only three percent disagree. However, the question

itself is leading. Clearly, given the choice, most people would prefer an employer that provides further opportunities, whether they are educational benefits, promotions, or monetary rewards.

Despite students' increased concern with money matters and their expectations of generous salaries, today's youth overwhelmingly choose happiness in life over fame. Less than a tenth of the students say they prefer status and recognition to life happiness. However, those few students are of a particular variety. First, the students who prefer fame over happiness are overwhelmingly male, outnumbering females almost six to one.

Secondly, the students from higher income families are much more apt to choose fame over happiness than are the students from moderate income homes. Material wealth takes on a special significance to those students who are accustomed to its benefits. And these students apparently are more likely to consider fame and wealth as elements important to their futures.

Yet, the great majority of today's students will forsake fame and fortune for happiness in their lives. For most, materially comfortable lives are practical goals, but desires for extreme affluence or recognition are vetoed in favor of personal contentment.

While today's students are seeking financially comfortable lives, they are not gambling with their futures. Almost three-fourths of the students choose having income security over taking a chance for earning higher pay. A solid, practical future is the goal of most students today. They repeatedly seem to reject extravagant wealth as not worth the risks of trying to obtain it. Equally distasteful to today's students is the simpler, materially-impoverished lifestyle advocated by many students in the late Sixties. Today's students are not particularly "money hungry" nor are they prepared to sacrifice the comforts of modern living.

In this area of income security, women seem particularly more reluctant to take risks for greater salaries. The female students, more than the men, say they would be satisfied with having financial security and would choose to forego gambles for higher pay.

Once again, family financial background seems to play a part in the kind of future-related attitudes the students hold. Students from wealthier backgrounds are more willing, at least in thought, to take chances to gain higher salaries than are students from lower income families. Almost two-fifths of the students whose parents earn over $15,000 a year said they would reject financial security and take risks in hopes of receiving greater incomes, compared to only one-fifth of the students whose parents earn under $7,000 a year who would take such chances. Those students who are accustomed to a sound financial base are more willing to take chances to earn higher rates of pay. However, those students who have not known income security to the same degree are content with and look forward to achieving that security.

Students today do not shy away from hard work, nor do they plan to

lead lives of self-denial. When asked to choose between a life of comfort and one of hard work but a sense of a job done well, the students split their votes. Half the students say a feeling of accomplishment coupled with difficult, challenging work would be preferable. The other half give the edge to leading comfortable, if not leisurely, lives. Here, neither income background nor sex of the students seem to affect their choices. Students from high income backgrounds are no more disposed to desiring lives of comfort than are students from less affluent families. And women indicate they are just as willing to lead satisfying lives of hard work as are today's male students.

The quest for stability by students is also exhibited in their concern for good family lives. Almost three-fourths of them prefer having good family lives to living a range of interesting experiences. Adventure, intrigue, and independence apparently don't carry much weight with today's youth when compared to the security of a happy home life. Surprisingly, the male students are no more eager to forsake home and family for interesting experiences than are the female. If youth today choose family life over adventure, happiness over fame, and financial security over risky, fat bankrolls, what then is the *one* thing that today's students want most of all out of life? Happiness in whatever they're doing was the simple answer given by a third of the students. The great majority of the other responses fell into one of two categories: love and marriage, or careers and wealth.

Male students' greatest life desires fell more often into the latter category; the female students' wishes more frequently into the former. Good jobs and attaining career goals are dreams shared equally by men and women. Desires for fame, success, and money were predominately held by the male students. Wealth and financial security are not foremost among the lifetime wishes of most women. In fact over twice as many men as women mentioned money as their one greatest goal in life.

This phenomenon seems to indicate the probable perpetuation of the traditional "bread winner" role for men. Women have historically relied upon men to be concerned with financial matters. The absence of an increase in women who are primarily interested in wealth or financial security may indicate a willingness or expectancy on their parts to have men remain more responsible for financial considerations.

Today's female students lend support to this theory. Almost half the high school women mention either love, marriage, children of their own, or good family lives as the one thing they want most out of life. Less than a fourth of the male students report any one of these wishes. Today's women students are looking forward to the traditional female roles. Jobs as wives and mothers are just as important to today's young women as they ever were. Young women look to these roles enthusiastically but not exclusively. Careers, however short-lived they may be, enter into the futures of almost all today's female students.

Goals and Hard Work—Accepted Facts of Life

Students today are intent on realizing their goals. They almost unanimously claim they are willing to work hard to realize their greatest desires in life, regardless of whether that goal is success, good health, or happiness. To achieve their ends, students are also willing to sacrifice. Many students mention working at more than one job and giving up free time and summer vacations as concessions they would make to fulfill their life goals. A smaller number would forfeit wealth and material pleasures to achieve their goals. Female students mention money, luxury and even career opportunities as items they would sacrifice. As noted earlier, women are most concerned with marriage and family. Therefore, job opportunities and wealth would be the most likely elements sacrificed to achieve these marriage and family life goals.

A minority of students are not willing to make any sacrifices for their goals. Almost a fifth of the students failed to mention any concessions they would be willing to make. In some respects, this contradicts the almost unanimous (95 percent) student willingness to work hard to achieve their life goals.

At the other end of the commitment spectrum, almost a third of the students claim they would give up everything and anything to realize the one desire they most want out of life. While this may indicate commendable and limitless determination to achieve planned objectives, it does not provide much basis for speculating on the priorities of these students. However, one characteristic of today's youth is clear: the great majority of students have formulated goals for themselves and are prepared to work industriously to turn their wishes into realities.

Students view their commitment to working hard as part of a historical tradition. The majority of students feel that their parents and most adults also worked hard and long to achieve their goals. This attitude is just another component of today's generally positive student regard for the adult world. Comparatively, students of the Seventies do not appear as openly hostile or cynical toward the older generation as did the students of the last decade. While conflict still exists between the adult and student worlds, young people now seem more willing not only to view teachers, principals, and parents as possible allies, but also to recognize adults as striving industriously to fulfill their desires in much the same manner that students anticipate working to meet their goals.

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THE SHORT-RANGE VIEW

Students' Next Five Years

WHAT will be the primary concerns of today's students during the next five years?

Completing their educations, finding jobs, and settling into marriage and raising families are the areas in which most of today's students plan to be occupied. Involvement with friends also will be among students' major interests in the next five years. Concern over the environment, religion, and politics rate lowest in students' plans for the immediate future.

A third of the students foresee school as a major factor in their next five years of life. The younger students, of course, feel a much greater concern in this area because completion of high school is greater in their sights. Less than a sixth of the students approaching high school graduation age named school as their major upcoming concern. Even though almost three-fifths of the 17-year-olds plan to further their education at the college level, less than a third of this age group ranked school either first or second among their immediate considerations. Apparently, while education *is* very important to today's youth, other factors also figure significantly in the near future of the older high school students.

Personal friends are one of those significant factors. Over half the students mention friends as one of their top three anticipated concerns during the next five years. Particularly, female students consider friends to be important elements of their lives in the next five years.

Students today also expect employment to be a major personal issue. Over half the students rated work either first or second among matters of great importance to them. The male students are especially

TABLE 22

How students ranked concerns "most important":

		By Age				
	% of Total	*14 and under*	*15*	*16*	*17*	*18 and over*
Politics	.7	.6	.5	1.4	.5	.5
Religion	9.9	7.9	9.9	10.0	10.8	12.3
School	24.0	38.1	24.9	22.0	15.0	13.1
Friends	10.0	10.3	11.3	9.0	9.7	5.9
Marriage/family	28.6	18.9	28.4	27.3	34.4	46.0
Work	19.7	15.5	16.6	23.8	24.1	19.7
Environment	5.3	3.4	7.7	5.8	3.1	2.5

concerned with their future employment pictures. Female students, as noted earlier, do not appear to have the same degree of parental pressure to hold down jobs during the summer or the school year. And women's plans seem to include careers and even short-term employment less often than do men's futures.

Tradition, Marriage, and the Nuclear Family

In addition, financial background seems to influence student attitudes about the immediate importance of work. Logically, those students from more affluent families less often foresee work as an endeavor of great importance to them in the next five years. Because greater numbers of wealthier students plan to attend four-year colleges, they are more likely to consider school, and not work, their most important personal concern in the coming five years.

Marriage and family considerations are also dominant concerns of youth. Even though only a handful of students announced plans to get married immediately after they graduate from high school, over half the students said that within the next five years marriage and families would be among their three most important interests. Marriage may not be something to rush into, today's high school students say, but it's something to be seriously considered in the next five years.

Marriage and family life, of course, are regarded more seriously by the older high school students. Also, more women than men expect marriage and family lives to be of great importance to them in the next five years. A third of the females, contrasted to less than a fourth of the males, gave marriage top billing on their list of immediate future concerns. However, the difference between the sexes was not actually very great. While marriage was not given the same prominence on their list of important concerns, the men were more likely than women to rank marriage as second or third in importance to them. Well over half of both sexes consider marriage and family life to be among their top three interests for the next five years.

Students from low income backgrounds had no greater inclination to rate marriage and family life as important to them in the next five

years than did the students from the most affluent homes. In addition, students from lower income families are no more approving of early marriages than are their wealthier counterparts. However, for many of today's students, the jury has not returned a verdict on the issue of early marriages. Two-fifths of the students do not have an opinion on whether they approve or disapprove of early marriages. An equal number of students, however, are opposed to early marriages, with the remaining fifth of the high school students regarding early marriages positively. More women than men are in favor of these marriages.

Despite the large number of students who voice neither opposition nor approval of early marriages, almost three-fourths of all students today feel that early marriages have a greater chance of ending in divorce. Even the female students, who have been repeatedly more supportive of marriage as an institution than men, strongly agree that marriages among the young are more likely to end sooner.

But what is considered an early marriage by today's youth? The consensus decided that if the husband or wife was age 17½, the marriage could be called a young one. However, the female students tend to consider age 16 more accurate while the male students lean toward 18.

If age 17 represents an early marriage, what then is the appropriate age for today's young people to tie the knot? The female students feel 20 is the earliest age women should get married and the male students vote 21 as the age men should reach before stepping to the altar.

Does overpopulation concern today's students? For the most part, yes. Most students today want two or three children. Very few want only one offspring. However, many female students have not completely bought the whole "keep it at two" concept.

More women than men want families of three or four children. This is another area where today's female students do not appear to be breaking with traditional behavior. Many of them intend to follow traditional roles, entering motherhood and marriage just as their mothers and grandmothers did.

Traditions in marriage and family may still be upheld by today's students but concern for religious matters does not seem to be holding its own among youth today. Less than a fourth of the high school students ranked religion among the aspects of life with which they will be most concerned in the next five years. The prediction that the youth of the Seventies will replace student activism with a new interest in religion does not seem to be valid.

Politics, as noted earlier, is lowest in the immediate concerns of today's students. Not only do students reject personal full-time careers in politics, but less than one-twentieth of them rated politics as one of their three most important pending concerns. Very few mention community politics as an area for personal participation and those who do are predominantly male students.

Conflict between parent and child seems to be an inevitable fact of life and this generation is no exception. Today's students, however, claim their relationships with their children will be different. Three-fifths of them claim that they will handle their children better than their parents did, contending that they will not be as strict as their parents and will allow their offspring greater personal freedom. The students, especially the females, vow to take a greater interest in their children, to improve communications with their offspring, and to try to understand their children's points of view more completely.

Students today, continuing in the tradition of generational conflicts, often clash with their parents. However, student descriptions of the disagreements show that they do not seem to generate from basic philosophical differences as much as they stem from breakdowns in parent-child interactions. This is seen in the distinction students make in describing their difficulties with their parents. About a sixth of the students claim that they have problems in getting along with their mothers, but less than half that number say they feel *resentment* toward their mother. Likewise, about a fifth of the students assert they have difficulty in getting along with their fathers, yet only a tenth of the students characterize that difficulty as "resentment."

Furthermore, over half the students today proclaim good relations with not only their parents, but siblings as well. And three-fourths of today's youth claim they feel no resentment toward any family members.

However, many students today do not feel free to discuss their problems with their parents. Almost half the students said they cannot comfortably approach their parents with personal matters of concern. And these blocks to interaction seem to enlarge as students grow older. There seems to be some truth to the saying that children grow apart from their parents during their teens, only to return to them in their twenties. The older students, ages 17 and 18, report more difficulty in approaching their parents with problems than do the younger students.

When today's students do confront their families with their problems, they most often discuss their concerns with their mothers. Less than a fifth of the students claim to talk over their problems with their fathers. While mothers are the family figures most often sought out for problem consultation by male and female students alike, more males than females go to their fathers for advice, and likewise, a greater number of female students discuss their problems with their mothers.

The majority of high school youths respect their parents equally. However, a fourth of the students say they have higher regard for their mothers, compared to only a tenth of the students who report greater respect for their fathers.

The perennial student complaints about parents have been: "They're too strict" and "Their ideas are so old-fashioned." Today, these charges have not lost any popularity. Although half the students describe their parents' ideas as "somewhat modern," large numbers of

students still complain there is a lack of communication with their parents because their parents' "values and experiences do not apply today" or because their parents "are unwilling to keep their standards up to date."

The age-old disagreements about curfews, hair length, style of dress, dates, and family responsibilities are still in the front lines of today's parent-student battlefields. Female students especially mention curfews and restrictions on whom they may date as areas where they feel their parents should be more lenient. The male students particularly feel their parents should relax their rules concerning hair and clothing styles.

The conflicts students are facing today with their parents may be the same disruptions found in all homes throughout the ages, but they are nonetheless serious. One indication of the gravity of parent-child disputes is the large number of students who claim they would be happier living away from home. Over two-fifths of the students, especially the 17- and 18-year-olds, feel they would be better off not living with their parents.

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POLITICS AND SOCIETY:
Another "Quiet Generation"?

AS noted earlier, today's high school students can hardly be described as "intensely political." In fact, the majority of students, rejecting "conservative" or "liberal" labels, describe themselves as "middle of the road."

Students today are not a strongly opinionated group, nor are they consistently like-minded on current issues. They seem particularly reluctant to offer opinions on topics that were once the pet issues of youth in the late Sixties. For example, many of today's students repeatedly refuse to comment on the right to dissent, American foreign policy, and the merits of working outside the "establishment."

One exception does stand out. Today's student opinion on the "butter or guns" issue still seems in fairly close agreement with the student sentiments of the late Sixties. A majority of today's students feel that more money should be directed toward the country's social needs than to military expenditures.

General Faith in the "System"

A faith in the American government is evident among today's youth. While they admit that considerable changes may be necessary and that corruption is widespread, students' overwhelming attitude toward government is sympathetic. American government is in need of assistance now, the students say, but there is no cause to drastically alter this basically sound system.

Most students plan to take only a limited role in politics. They feel obligated as citizens to vote in elections, and they intend to do so faithfully. However, voting and perhaps signing petitions are just about

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TABLE 23

Opinion of U.S. constitutional form of government:

	% of Total	By Age				
		14 and under	15	16	17	18 and over
Needs considerable change	39.0	31.8	42.6	36.2	41.2	46.1
Just about right	54.7	62.8	48.1	59.1	54.7	48.6
Should be abolished in favor of different form of government	5.6	4.4	8.5	4.2	4.2	2.9
Don't know/no answer	.7	1.0	.9	.5		2.4

TABLE 24

Major national problems confronting country now and in next two years:

	Now	Next two years
	% of Total	% of Total
Politics	69.1	27.8
Consumerism	24.6	12.4
Ecology	51.8	25.4
Racial tension	33.9	10.1
Unemployment	53.0	23.8
Welfare	43.0	12.1
The economy	48.3	30.9
Urban crisis	24.8	6.5
Energy crisis	12.5	6.7
Drugs	1.5	.4
Crime	.4	.2
Other	2.6	.4
Don't know	.4	1.2

the limits to student involvement with politics today. Very few report having actively campaigned for a political candidate and even fewer foresee this as a future activity.

Despite their disinterest in political involvement, a majority of students feel that politics is the most important issue facing the country today. However, this is not to remain the nation's greatest concern for long, the students say. During the next two years, the young people see economic, ecological, and unemployment problems as the most pressing American concerns. The country's political scandals are viewed as transitory, to be supplanted by the larger economic and environmental issues.

The world as a whole also has big problems with which it must immediately contend. Today's students feel that greatest among these world difficulties are overpopulation and environmental preservation. The threat of a third world war is also seen as a very real problem by a fifth of today's youth.

Whom do students credit with influencing and formulating their political beliefs? Parents are given primary responsibility for developing their children's political attitudes, with friends and the media playing lesser but still significant roles.

Most students feel either that their political beliefs are in agreement with their parents' attitudes or that politics is a "neutral" subject in their families. Other social issues witness greater disparities of opinions between parents and children. While most students' ideas concerning drugs, sex, and clothing styles jibe with their parents' beliefs, a greater number of students claim they disagree with their parents in these areas.

Overall, however, the generations do not differ dramatically or irreconcilably over any one social issue today. In fact, students today feel there is a mutual exchange of attitude influence between the old and young. Half of the students feel the younger generation more often influences adults and half the students believe the older generation has greater influence on the young.

Students' religious practices today do seem significantly different from their parents' behavior, although the disparity does not often surface as a major parent-child conflict. Only a fifth of the students attend religious services regularly, while twice as many parents are reported as attending regularly.

What are today's student feelings on more contemporary issues, such as abortion? Almost half of the students agree that abortions should be legal, but formidable student opposition is also present and should not be overlooked. Over a third of the students (more women than men) object to legalizing abortions.

Student opinion today is not highly consensual; each issue elicits a range of student thought. Neither are students today particularly vocal in their beliefs.

High school youths today are different from their student predeces-

sors of five years ago. Students now look at politics and yawn when once they staged protests and demonstrations. They are more ambitious and silently determined to work within society's existing frameworks for their own happiness and success as well as the improvement of their own communities.

The students themselves are not particularly aware of these differences between themselves and earlier students. They recognize their greater adherence to "*traditional ways*" where music tastes and personal attire trends are concerned; but most maintain that compared to five years ago, they either have a less traditional relationship with the "establishment" or that their relationship is about the same as that of students in 1969.

In recent years, most students' only political activities have been voting in elections, signing petitions, or raising money for causes. In fact, only slightly over half the students said they had voted in any election, including school elections for class officers or student body president. Less than a sixth of the students have ever written to a public official, participated in a social action demonstration, or worked for a political campaign.

However, today's students do not intend to neglect their obligations as citizens, such as voting. Nearly all students indicate they plan to vote in every election for which they are eligible. Active involvement in politics, on the other hand, is a different case. Less than a sixth of today's youth are willing to run for public office at any level. And of those few who are not opposed to holding an elected office, the willing men outnumber the women two to one.

Student Attitudes on Public Issues

Half the students feel the issue that really "hits home" with them is education. Because they are involved with education and because so many plan to continue with post-secondary school work, students naturally feel that education problems are most important to them. Unemployment and the economy were cited as pressing personal concerns. This, too, is not unexpected. Over half the students foresee work as a major aspect of their lives in the next five years. With increased talk of a shrinking American dollar and the greater difficulty of finding jobs even with a college education, it is not surprising that students today are personally worried about the health of America's economy and labor market.

Students today recognize the government's shortcomings but do not respond as angrily or actively to these weaknesses as students have done in the past. Instead, they seem tolerant of their government's failings, extending patience or at least indifference to the system while expecting the situation to right itself.

One of the changes in American government strongly recommended by today's students is the direct election of the President. Four-fifths of the students advocate the abolishment of the Electoral

TABLE 25

How students rated issues "most important":

		By Age				
	% of Total	*14 and under*	*15*	*16*	*17*	*18 and over*
Education	49.3	57.1	50.7	47.3	43.9	44.0
Legal rights & responsibilities	9.7	9.5	11.6	7.5	9.1	10.3
National volunteer services	.7	.5	.3	1.6	.6	.5
Drugs	7.2	7.0	9.7	6.1	4.2	9.4
Economy & employment	8.2	4.7	6.6	9.7	12.1	8.3
Environment	8.8	6.7	9.3	9.7	9.2	6.9
Poverty/welfare	2.7	2.6	2.8	2.5	3.2	2.4
Foreign relations	1.5	2.5	.8	1.8	1.8	.6
Race relations/racial issues	3.5	4.5	2.3	5.0	2.8	4.5
Values, ethics, and culture	4.4	1.6	2.2	5.4	8.7	5.4
Political involvement	2.5	1.8	2.9	1.7	2.9	4.3

College in favor of a popular vote election. Only a tenth of the students offered no opinion on this topic.

However, on other political issues, today's students are either more reluctant to state their views, or they have not formulated opinions on these topics. Can a person dissent and still remain loyal to his country? A third of the students offer no comment on this issue and a fifth of the students feel a person is disloyal to his country if he dissents. Past eras of students have been closely identified with strong beliefs in the right to peacefully dissent. Yet, half the students today either disagree or have no opinion on the issue. Today's youth seems not so much "conservative" as apolitical. Repeatedly large numbers of students either offer no opinions or back off from issues that were once largely viewed as youth's primary concerns.

Student disenchantment with American government was once measured by the number of young people who believed that they had to work outside the existing structure to change the established government. Today, two-thirds of the high school students either have no opinion on the issue or feel change should be attempted by working within the establishment. A tenth of today's youth strongly believe change is effected only by working from outside the structure.

The student anti-war movement of the Sixties accused the United States government of having imperialistic designs on less powerful nations of the world. Today, students are evenly divided in their opinions on whether American foreign policy is primarily concerned with protecting or advancing its own interests. One-third of the students believe this country's foreign policy is basically self-serving, one-third disagree, and the remainder offer no comment.

Do today's youth feel *more* than disinterest towards politics? Is distrust a more accurate description of their attitudes toward politicians? Almost three-fourths of the students feel that corruption and

TABLE 26

Whether respondent agrees/disagrees with . . .

		% of Total
There should be a guaranteed annual income to insure every citizen of the U.S. a decent and adequate standard of living	Agree	68.8
	Disagree	30.5
	Don't know/no answer	.7
Community control of schools in poverty areas is the best way to provide the best education	Agree	64.4
	Disagree	33.8
	Don't know/no answer	1.8
Bilingual education program should be offered in areas where high percentage of families are non-English speaking	Agree	77.3
	Disagree	20.7
	Don't know/no answer	2.0
Adequate health care for all should be provided through a national health plan	Agree	86.3
	Disagree	12.6
	Don't know/no answer	1.1
Government must provide safe, decent and sanitary housing for all Americans whatever the cost	Agree	62.5
	Disagree	36.5
	Don't know/no answer	.9
Money should be spent on social needs rather than on military expenditures	Agree	58.4
	Disagree	39.8
	Don't know/no answer	1.8
If people are unable to find jobs, it's their own fault	Agree	32.1
	Disagree	66.1
	Don't know/no answer	1.8
It would be a good idea to have a system of national service for both sexes which would require spending at least two years with such agencies as the Peace Corps, Vista, etc.	Agree	38.4
	Disagree	59.9
	Don't know/no answer	1.7
Military service should be entirely voluntary	Agree	72.9
	Disagree	25.7
	Don't know/no answer	1.4

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TABLE 27

Topics that might affect the behavior of young people:

	% of Total
T.V. sketches	50.4
Yes	46.7
No	2.8
Don't know/no answer	
News of violence and crime reported in newspapers and on T.V.	68.0
Yes	29.7
No	2.3
Don't know/no answer	
Corruption in government	68.7
Yes	29.1
No	2.1
Don't know/no answer	
Uneasy world affairs	59.2
Yes	38.5
No	2.4
Don't know/no answer	
Violence & pornography in movies	61.5
Yes	36.0
No	2.6
Don't know/no answer	
The drug culture	83.8
Yes	14.7
No	1.5
Don't know/no answer	
Reported high divorce rate	40.3
Yes	56.9
No	2.7
Don't know/no answer	
Supreme court ruling on pornography	35.7
Yes	61.0
No	3.3
Don't know/no answer	
Laws	75.2
Yes	23.1
No	1.7
Don't know/no answer	
Religion/religious teachers	43.5
Yes	53.7
No	2.8
Don't know/no answer	

dishonesty is widespread at the highest levels of government. Only a tenth dissented, but, even in times when political scandals make headlines almost daily, a full fifth of the students have no opinion on governmental dishonesty.

Another interesting point is that today's youth, for the most part, do not believe that wealth is a prerequisite for getting elected. Half the students retain their belief in the American ideal that any person, poor or rich, can become President of the United States.

Students' attitudes toward politics seem to have diverged onto different paths since the decline of student activism. For many, politics is simply boring and not a matter for personal concern. Others' opinions have mellowed. Students are no longer rising up in anger at politicians who appear to be dragging their feet to slow down progressive forces, but a strong distrust of politics lingers on. Yet, that distrust seems to be transitory, growing or waning from one administration to the next. Underneath the apprehension, students today have not relinquished their fundamental belief in the American system of government. They believe the system is stronger than any one of its politicians and therefore, given time, the government will always regain its stature.

Where does this faith come from? What determines students' political views today? Over half the students claim their parents are primarily responsible for developing student political viewpoints. However, the older students give less credit to their parents as opinion-shapers and name school and teachers as influential.

The other two great influences on youth's political beliefs are peer opinions and the media. More than half the students ranked television, radio, and newspapers among the three major factors affecting their political outlook. Most students say working for a politician, or participating in a political activity or in a politically-related job are not highly influential.

Sex, Money, and the Military—Yes, We Have No Agreement

How *do* today's students feel about abortion, guaranteed annual incomes, pornography, and the volunteer army and military expenditures?

Now that the cloud of induction into the armed services has passed from over students' heads, how do they regard military service? Three-quarters of the students believe that service in the armed forces should be entirely voluntary. The one-fourth that disagree come from neither a particular region of the country nor a particular financial background.

A volunteer army may be good for the country, but most students do not feel the military is good for them personally. Over half of the students say they would probably or definitely not enlist in the volunteer army. A mere twentieth of the students say they will definitely enlist and another fifth of the students claim they will probably enlist.

One fear of having a volunteer army has been that only people from financially insecure backgrounds and those with lower intelligence capabilities will be attracted to the armed forces. Among the small number of students who said they would at least consider enlisting, no particular income bracket or region of the country was more prominent than another. However, of those who said they would definitely enlist, most were from lower income backgrounds. Not surprisingly, more women than men indicated they would definitely not join the volunteer military service.

Alternatively, students also disapprove of a national system of mandatory volunteer service in an organization such as the Peace Corps. Although this proposal draws more student support than the prospect of joining the volunteer army, three-fifths of the students are opposed to being required to serve in a volunteer organization. However, the proposal does find more favor with the students from less affluent homes. Almost half the students whose parental incomes are under $10,000 a year are in favor of a program of two-year mandatory volunteer service, compared to only a third of the students from wealthier homes who okayed the proposal.

Although some adults may argue that today's youth will feel differently when they themselves have to pay taxes, the majority of students support the concept of a guaranteed annual income. Most students feel that the present welfare system is at least somewhat effective, but three-fourths of today's youth also believe "there should be a guaranteed annual income to insure every citizen a decent and adequate standard of living."

Consistent in their support of the needy, students today also approve of proposals for a national health care plan and government-financed housing for all, regardless of the costs involved. Only a tenth of the students feel that "adequate health care for all should not be provided through a national health plan." More students disapprove of the housing proposal. A third of today's youth disagree that "the government must provide safe, decent and sanitary housing for all Americans whatever the cost." While not a certainty, it seems possible that the students of the majority opinion in these cases, perhaps out of their own lack of knowledge about socialized medicine and housing problems, are actually just supporting "adequate health care for all" and "safe, decent housing," rather than a particular government policy.

However, today's students do support particular solutions to other social issues. For example, a majority of students support community control of schools in poverty areas as well as instituting bilingual education programs where a high percentage of families are non-English speaking. Only a fifth of the students disagree, contending that education systems should not utilize two languages in areas with a large non-English speaking population. Despite majority support from all students on these issues of community control and bilingual education, students from lower income families are far more enthusiastic in their

approval of these topics than are the students of wealthier backgrounds.

For the most part, student sympathies today, as in the past, are repeatedly extended to the country's disadvantaged sectors. One further example of these sentiments is student attitude toward unemployment. Two-thirds of today's students feel that if people are unable to get jobs, it is not the fault of the people. However, as their parental incomes increase, fewer students adhere to this view. Students from wealthier backgrounds are more apt to blame the unemployed themselves for their jobless status.

Today's youth are compassionate about the nation's pressing social issues, even if they are not crusading en masse for causes. They believe that the government should focus its energies on the country's domestic social issues rather than on military fortification. Although the support was not whole-hearted, a three-fifths majority choose "butter" over "guns."

What are student reactions toward ethical and moral issues like abortion and pornography? And more specifically, is the once-predicted increase in sexual leniency reflected at all in today's student opinions on these issues?

"New morality" seems to be no more of an influence on student beliefs concerning abortion than does any other one factor. Students are divided on the abortion issue, with those in favor of legalizing abortion having a slight edge. One thing is clear: students who are opposed to legalizing abortion are *strongly* opposed. There is little room for middle ground in the opposition camp. Whereas, those in favor of legalizing abortion often describe their approval as "mild" rather than "strong."

A sixth of the students voiced no opinion on the issue. These were overwhemingly male students. The men outnumber the women, who apparently feel more closely affected by the abortion question, by two to one.

As was seen in other areas—career choice, personal concerns, pay expectations—young women today seem to be following traditional life roads. Most expect wife and mother roles to be their primary jobs and the significant sector of women who veto the legalization of abortions demonstrate beliefs which are congruent with the traditional conception of these roles.

A majority of students, including a particularly significant majority of women, feel there should be no laws regulating a person's control of his or her reproductive life. Less than half of the students agree that abortions should be legal, contrasted to three-fifths of the students who feel no law should infringe on reproductive freedom.

Student opinion on the free dissemination of contraceptives and birth control information is divided in a pattern common to today's student opinion on issues of all sorts. One-third of the students feel such laws should be repealed, a third believe such laws should stand,

and a third offered no opinion on the matter. Once again, more female students, following traditional lines of thought, believe that laws governing birth control and birth control information should not be abolished.

It appears, therefore, that the disputes revolving around reproductive freedom will be passed on from today's adult world to their children's futures. Students today are verbally no closer to a consensus on these issues than are their parents. If today's students are experiencing times of increased sexual freedom, their opinions on abortion and birth control do not seem to reflect any "new permissiveness."

Likewise, student attitudes toward pornography are no more relaxed than those of contemporary adults. Most students are in agreement with the recent Supreme Court ruling that "each community should set its own standards for defining what movies, magazines, and plays are 'obscene' and 'illegal'." Less than a fifth of the students disagree, claiming pornography should not be a matter judged by the individual community.

Most students believe pornographic printed material and movies should not be accessible to everyone, regardless of age. However, they also do not feel that pornography should be available only to adults. Perhaps they are saying: "The adult restriction is too great and children should not be allowed access to pornography, but a relaxation of laws to extend availability to 16- or 18-year-olds would be better." In other words, the students say: "Include us." Two-fifths of the students do not believe the country needs stricter pornography laws. However, almost a third of the students, offering no opinions, are withholding judgment on the need for more restrictive laws.

Female students today take a harder line on pornography than do the male students. More women than men not only consistently oppose increasing the availability of pornographic material to younger people, but are in favor of even stricter pornography laws.

The Generation Crack—More Like Their Parents Than Not

Drug use seems to be the one contemporary issue that witnesses both the greatest agreement and disagreement between students and their parents. Almost half of the students say their ideas about drugs very closely resemble their parents' opinions, but a large number of students, almost a fifth, are in *strong* conflict with their parents' drug attitudes. On no other issue do so many students indicate their beliefs are in strong disagreement with their parents' feelings. Attitudes towards politics, sex, education, and clothing styles do not appear to be as hotly contested as drugs.

In addition, agreement on the issue of drugs does not seem to be a function of age. Just as many 14-year-olds as 17-year-olds note differences in their opinions and their parents' beliefs about drugs. Also, the number of students who have grown closer in agreement with their

parents' drug attitudes in the last two years equals the number of students who have drifted away from their parents' sentiments. About two-fifths of the students claim their drug beliefs have remained constant over the past two years.

Student and parental attitudes toward both work and education are harmonious, increasingly so as students grow older. Only a handful of today's youth seems to be in strong opposition to their parents' attitudes and values regarding work and schooling. This differs quite sharply from the once frequently heard student vows never to work in conventional nine-to-five routine jobs. In fact, almost half of the students say that in the past two years their work attitudes have grown more similar to their parents' values. And even greater numbers of older students report recent attitude alterations in favor of their parents' views.

Parental concern over the so-called "new morality" does not appear to be an outstanding contemporary issue. Less than a third of the students say their values concerning sex are in disagreement with their parents' attitudes. Another third of the students say their ideas and their parents' ideas regarding sex are not a source of contention. More men than women proclaim sex a neutral family matter, possibly indicating the age-old tradition that sex be a parental topic of discussion more often with daughters than with sons. However, female student attitudes toward sex seem to be in no greater disparity with parental values than are male student attitudes.

Although differences of opinion over religious attitudes do not seem to be a major source of parent-child disputes, students' religious practices do vary markedly from their parents' behavior. Half the students report their religious values and attitudes are in agreement with those of their parents, while a third claim religious questions are a neutral matter between them and their parents.

Slightly more than half of today's families attend religious services regularly, but only a fourth of the students attend these services either alone or with their families. The remaining students (75 percent) attend religious services irregularly or not at all.

However, almost half of today's students consider themselves to be "religious." And almost all of those students who view themselves as religious people feel they are either somewhat serious or very serious in their religious beliefs.

In addition, today's students speak of religion as a progressive force in history. Although a third of the students say they don't know whether to view religion as a progressive or reactionary movement, almost half were at least somewhat confident that religion fosters change, not inhibits it.

Nonetheless, religion does not appear to be today's youth replacement for student activism. Not even a third of the students today attend religious services regularly, although more do characterize themselves as being religious. Student interests tend to be found more in experi-

ences with school, work, and activities with their friends than in their religious beliefs.

If the draft, the Vietnam war, and the civil rights movement were major influencing factors on the student behavior of the Sixties, what societal ingredients are affecting today's youth?

Students overwhelmingly claim that drugs are the single worst influence on today's generation of young people. Although students failed to name drugs as a major world or national problem, they believe drugs have a more negative and serious influence on youth than corruption in the country's government, an increasingly violent environment, or tense international relations.

Conversely, students today feel that a relaxation of sexual standards, if one truly exists, does not adversely affect today's youth. Only one student mentioned the "new morality" as a negative influence on this student generation.

A majority of students also believe increased violence, as reported by the media and depicted in movies, has a big effect on today's youth. On the other hand, most students do not feel higher divorce rates, religion, or court rulings on pornography play a major role in influencing the behavior of today's youth.

Today, students recognize that differences do exist between their behavior and the student actions and attitudes of five years ago. However, today's youth seem to be aware only of the "cosmetic" differences, such as changes in clothing styles and tastes in music. They do not seem to take notice of their quieter political views and their greater agreement with their parents on social issues. In fact, most students feel they are *less* traditionally minded than the students of five years ago.

Most students feel both their tastes in music and in clothes probably resemble traditional ways more now than five years ago. However, the students feel their "'relationship to the establishment" is probably about the same or *less* traditional than their predecessors' relationship with the establishment.

Today's students apparently have an incomplete idea of student life in the late Sixties. They do not recognize themselves as less outspoken, less politically concerned, and more in agreement with their teachers, principals, and parents. Students today speak more positively of the education they are receiving, the country they live in, and the futures they are planning than did the students of five years ago.

The Practical Generation

The prognosis on today's youth? Very good. They are determined, ambitious, and committed to their own individual goals.

This is not the generation that will fight for the social revolution the student Left once announced was impending. This is not to say students today are uninterested in the world around them. *They are very much concerned.* They have a new approach to conquering social ills.

Their philosophy: take a small piece of what's wrong and work exclusively on it until it's right. Altering the whole world or even the United States is not their primary goal. Community level action is today's student mode of operation.

Above all else, today's students are down to earth and practical. They realize the problems that lie ahead in their lives: completing their educations, getting jobs, embarking on careers. And while this pragmatism may not be described as "sparkling," "activist," or even "new," it is an *honest* method of building futures.

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